

SATIRE VIII

stemmata quid faciunt? quid prodest, Pontice, longo
sanguine censi, pictos ostendere uultus
maiorum et stantes in curribus Aemilianos
et Curios iam dimidios umerosque minorem
Coruinum et Galbam auriculis nasoque carentem, 5
quis fructus generis tabula iactare capaci
censorem posse ac multa contingere uirga
fumosos equitum cum dictatore magistros,
si coram Lepidis male uiuitur? effigies quo
tot bellatorum, si luditur alea pernox 10
ante Numantinos, si dormire incipis ortu
luciferi, quo signa duces et castra mouebant?
cur Allobrogicis et magna gaudeat ara
natus in Herculeo Fabius lare, si cupidus, si
uanus et Euganea quantumuis mollior agna, 15
si tenerum attritus Catinensi pumice lumbum
squalentes traducit auos emptorque ueneni
frangenda miseram funestat imagine gentem?
tota licet ueteres exornent undique cerae
atria, nobilitas sola est atque unica uirtus. 20
Paulus uel Cossus uel Drusus moribus esto,
hos ante effigies maiorum pone tuorum,
praecedant ipsas illi te consule uirgas.

4 umerosque *P*: humeroque *Dresd.* 155: nasumque Φ

5–6 *om. G, del Hermann*

5 coruinum *P Dresd.* 155: coruini Φ

6–8 *del. Guyet*

7 *habent PG, om. Φ censorem Harrison: coruinum P: coruini G: pontifices Housman*

posse ac *Withof, Housman: posthac P: post haec GK:*

8 fumosos *PFG: famosos Φ*

11 ortu *PGΣ: ortus Φ*

17 traducit *PSAGUΣ: producit FHLOZ producat KT*

SATIRE VIII

stemma quid faciunt? quid prodest, Pontice, longo
sanguine censi, pictos ostendere uultus
maiorum et stantes in curribus Aemilianos
et Curios iam dimidios umerosque minorem
Coruinum et Galbam auriculis nasoque carentem, 5
quis fructus generis tabula iactare capaci
censorem posse ac multa contingere uirga
fumosos equitum cum dictatore magistros,
si coram Lepidis male uiuitur? effigies quo
tot bellatorum, si luditur alea pernox 10
ante Numantinos, si dormire incipis ortu
luciferi, quo signa duces et castra mouebant?
cur Allobrogicis et magna gaudeat ara
natus in Herculeo Fabius lare, si cupidus, si
uanus et Euganea quantumuis mollior agna, 15
si tenerum attritus Catinensi pumice lumbum
squalentes traducit auos emptorque ueneni
frangenda miseram funestat imagine gentem?
tota licet ueteres exornent undique cerae
atria, nobilitas sola est atque unica uirtus. 20
Paulus uel Cossus uel Drusus moribus esto,
hos ante effigies maiorum pone tuorum,
praecedant ipsas illi te consule uirgas.

4 umerosque *P*: humeroque *Dresd.* 155: nasumque Φ

5–6 *om. G, del Hermann*

5 coruinum *P Dresd.* 155: coruini Φ

6–8 *del. Guyet*

7 *habent PG, om. Φ censorem Harrison: coruinum P: coruini G: pontifices Housman*

posse ac *Withof, Housman: posthac P: post haec GK:*

8 fumosos *PFG: famosos Φ*

11 ortu *PGΣ: ortus Φ*

17 traducit *PSAGUΣ: producit FHLOZ producat KT*

SATIRE VIII

What use are family trees? What's to be gained, Ponticus by being
assessed with a long blood-line, with showing off painted faces
of your ancestors – Aemiliani standing in their chariots,
Curii now chopped in half, a Corvinus smaller in the shoulders
and a Galba lacking his ears and his nose – 5
what profit is there from being able to brag about a censor in your
extensive family tree, joining, with many a branch, smoky
Cavalry Officers
with a dictator, if your life in the presence of the Lepidi is
a bad one? What use are
images of so many war-heroes if the dice are played all night long 10
in front of Numantini, if you only start to sleep at the rising
of Lucifer – a time when generals used to stir their standards
and their camp?
Why should a Fabius, born in the house of Hercules, crow about
the Allobroges and the Great Altar if he is greedy,
if he is a fool and softer than any Euganean lamb, 15
if he has his groin rubbed smooth with Catanian pumice
and so betrays his hairy ancestors? If as a poison-dealer
he pollutes his pathetic clan and his image ought to be smashed?
Even though ancient wax masks decorate your whole entrance
hall,
the one and only nobility is virtue. 20
Be a Paulus or a Cossus or a Drusus in your behaviour;
put these men before the images of your ancestors
and let them walk in front of the rods when you are consul.

prima mihi debes animi bona. sanctus haberi
 iustitiaeque tenax factis dictisque mereris? 25
 agnosco procerem; salve Gaetulice, seu tu
 Silanus: quocumque alio de sanguine rarus
 ciuis et egregius patriae contingis ouanti,
 exclamare libet populus quod clamat Osiri
 inuento. quis enim generosum dixerit hunc qui 30
 indignus genere et praeclaro nomine tantum
 insignis? nanum cuiusdam Atlanta uocamus,
 Aethiopem Cycnum, prauam extortamque puellam
 European; canibus pigris scabieque uetusta
 leuibis et siccae lambentibus ora lucernae 35
 nomen erit pardus, tigris, leo, si quid adhuc est
 quod fremat in terris uiolentius. ergo cauebis
 et metues ne tu sic Creticus aut Camerinus.
 his ego quem monui? tecum est mihi sermo, Rubelli
 Blande. tumes alto Drusorum stemmate, tamquam 40
 feceris ipse aliquid propter quod nobilis esses,
 ut te conciperet quae sanguine fulget Iuli,
 non quae uentoso conducta sub aggere textit.
 ‘uos humiles’ inquis ‘uulgi pars ultima nostri,
 quorum nemo queat patriam monstrare parentis, 45
 ast ego Cecropides.’ uiuas et originis huius
 gaudia longa feras. tamen ima plebe Quiritem
 facundum inuenies, solet hic defendere causas

27 alio *PΦ* alto *Richards*

33 prauam *PΦ*: paruam *ALO*

37 fremat *PΦ*: fremit *ALT*

38 sic *Lond. mus. Brit. Add. 11997*: si *P*: sis *Φ*

40 stemmate *PAFGHU*: sanguine *KLOTZ*

44 inquis *AKLO*: inquit *PΦ*

The first thing you must show (I think) is goodness of heart.

Do you deserve to be
considered unimpeachable, never letting go of justice in your
deeds and words? 25

I salute you as a leader of men: hail, Gaetulicus, or you
Silanus – or from whatever other blood-line – you turn out
to be a rare
and outstanding citizen to your exultant fatherland and
I want to shout out what the crowd shouts when Osiris has been
found. For who would call this man ‘noble’ if he is 30
a disgrace to his family and only distinguished by virtue
of his glorious

title? We do call somebody’s dwarf ‘Atlas’,
the Ethiopian ‘Swan’, the twisted and deformed girl
‘Europa’: dogs which are idle, smooth-skinned with chronic
mange, which lick the rim of the dry lamp – they 35
will be given the name ‘leopard’, ‘tiger’, ‘lion’ or anything else
which roars more violently on the earth. For that reason you
will beware
and be anxious not to be a ‘Creticus’ or a ‘Camarinus’ only
in that way.

Who have I been warning with these words? My conversation
is with you,
Rubellius Blandus. You are puffed up with the lofty pedigree
of the Drusi, as if 40
you have personally done something to make you noble,
so that a woman glowing with Julian blood conceived you
rather than one who did weaving for hire under the windy
embankment.

‘You are inferiors’ you say ‘the lowest section of our people,
and none of you could point out the fatherland of your parent,
whilst I am a Cecropid’. Long life to you and may you enjoy 45
long-lasting
joy from this pedigree of yours. You will however find in the
lowest class
an articulate citizen, and this man has the habit of defending
the case

nobilis indocti; ueniet de plebe togata
qui iuris nodos et legum aenigmata soluat; 50
hinc petit Euphraten iuuenis domitique Bataui
custodes aquilas armis industrius; at tu
nil nisi Cecropides truncoque simillimus Hermae.
nullo quippe alio uincis discrimine quam quod
illi marmoreum caput est, tua uiuit imago. 55
dic mihi, Teucrorum proles, animalia muta
quis generosa putet nisi fortia. nempe uolucrum
sic laudamus equum, facili cui plurima palma
feruet et exultat rauco uictoria circo;
nobilis hic, quocumque uenit de gramine, cuius 60
clara fuga ante alios et primus in aequore puluis.
sed uenale pecus Coryphaei posteritas et
Hirpini, si rara iugo uictoria sedit.
nil ibi maiorum respectus, gratia nulla
umbrarum; dominos pretiis mutare iubentur 65
exiguus, trito et ducunt epiraedia collo
segnipedes dignique molam uersare nepotes.
ergo ut miremur te, non tua, priuum aliquid da
quod possim titulis incidere praeter honores
quos illis damus ac dedimus, quibus omnia debes. 70
haec satis ad iuuenem quem nobis fama superbum
tradit et inflatum plenumque Nerone propinquo;
rarus enim ferme sensus communis in illa
fortuna. sed te censi laude tuorum,

49 plebe *PSAGLU*: gente Φ : pube *Housman* togata *codd.*: togatus *Scriverius*

51 hinc *GU*, *Weidner*: hic *P Φ S*

57 putet *PAFL*: putat Φ

62 coryphaei *GU²Σ*: cor•c• *P*: corythae Φ

66 trito et *Goth.* 2.52, *Laur.* 34.34.: et trito *P Sang*: trito *AGU*: tritoque Φ

67 nepotes *PFGHU*: nepotis Φ

68 priuum *Salmasius*: primum *codd.*

of the uneducated nobleman. There will arise from the
 toga-wearing plebs
 a man to untie statutory knots and legal puzzles; 50
 a youth from this class, tireless in fighting, makes for the
 Euphrates and for the eagles
 which watch over the conquered Batavian: but you are
 nothing but a Cecropid, looking just like a stunted Herm.
 You are superior by no criterion at all except that
 the herm has a marble head, while you are a living statue. 55
 Tell me, o offspring of the Trojans, who could think that dumb
 animals
 are well-bred unless they are strong? That is why we praise
 the swift
 horse – the one who wins easily and who has many a triumph
 seething
 and celebrating in the hoarse Circus;
 whatever grass it comes from, this one is ‘pedigree’ whose 60
 running is clear of the rest and its dust is first on the track.
 The descendants of Coryphaeus and Hirpinus are just beasts up
 for sale
 if Victory sits but rarely on their yoke.
 No regard for ancestors there, no favour conferred by their
 shades; these slow-footed scions are told to change their masters 65
 for tiny fees and drag carriages with worn necks,
 fit only to turn the millstone.
 And so, to make us admire you and not just what you have,
 give me something
 individual which I could chisel onto your tablet besides those titles
 which we give (and have given) to those men to whom
 you owe everything. 70
 That is enough to say to the young man who – as his reputation
 reports – was
 proud and puffed up and full of his connections to Nero;
 for empathy is a rare commodity in that
 income-bracket. I would not be happy to see you assessed on
 the glory of your

Pontice, noluerim sic ut nihil ipse futurae 75
 laudis agas. miserum est aliorum incumbere famae,
 ne collapsa ruant subductis tecta columnis.
 stratus humi palmes uiduas desiderat ulmos.
 esto bonus miles, tutor bonus, arbiter idem
 integer; ambiguae si quando citabere testis 80
 incertaeque rei, Phalaris licet imperet ut sis
 falsus et admoto dictet periuria tauro,
 summum crede nefas animam praeferre pudori
 et propter uitam uiuendi perdere causas.
 dignus morte perit, cenet licet ostrea centum 85
 Gaurana et Cosmi toto mergatur aeno.
 expectata diu tandem prouincia cum te
 rectorem accipiet, pone irae frena modumque,
 pone et auaritiae, miserere inopum sociorum:
 ossa uides rerum uacuis exsucta medullis. 90
 respice quid moneant leges, quid curia mandet,
 praemia quanta bonos maneant, quam fulmine iusto
 et Capito et Tutor ruerint damnante senatu,
 piratae Cilicum. sed quid damnatio confert?
 praeconem, Chaerippe, tuis circumspice pannis, 95
 cum Pansa eripiat quidquid tibi Natta reliquit,
 iamque tace; furor est post omnia perdere naulum.
 non idem gemitus olim neque uulnus erat par
 damnorum sociis florentibus et modo uictis.

78 desiderat *PΦ Sang.*: desideret *FGHU, Beer*

88 accipiet *Φ*: accipiat *PAF Sang.*

90 rerum *PFGHU*: regum *Φ*

93 tutor *ΦΣ*: numitor *PS Mico*

98 neque *PAF*: nec *SΦ*

people, Ponticus, with you doing nothing to secure glory
in the future.

75

It is pathetic to depend on the renown of others
in case the columns are pulled down and the roof crashes in ruins.
The vine-shoot strewn on the ground longs for the bereaved
elm-trees.

Be a good soldier, a good guardian and also an honest
judge; if ever you are summoned as a witness in a dubious
and unclear case – even though Phalaris orders you to lie
and dictates perjuries with his bull moved into position –
think it the height of wickedness to prefer existence to honour
and to ruin the reasons for living for the sake of your life.
The man who deserves death is not alive, even though he dines
on one hundred

80

85

Gauran oysters and bathes in a bronze tub full of Cosmus' perfume.
When finally the province that you have been waiting for
so long

welcomes you as its governor, then rein in and moderate
your anger,

set a limit to your greed, take pity on the penniless allies;
you see the bones of their property sucked out, their marrows
empty.

90

Keep an eye on what the laws advocate, what the senate-house
stipulates,

how great are the benefits which await good men and with how
righteous a lightning-bolt

both Capito and Tutor were ruined when the senate condemned
them,

those pirates of the Cilicians. But what good came
of the condemnation?

Chaerippus, look out an auctioneer for your rags
since Pansa is snatching whatever Natta left you,
and now stop speaking up: it is madness after losing all else to
lose your fare.

95

The groaning was not the same, nor was the injury of their losses
as great

when the allies were thriving and had only just been conquered.

plena domus tunc omnis, et ingens stabat acervus 100
 nummorum, Spartana chlamys, conchyliis Coa,
 et cum Parrhasii tabulis signisque Myronis
 Phidiaeum uiuebat ebur, nec non Polycliti
 multus ubique labor, rarae sine Mentore mensae.
 inde Dolabella atque audax Antonius, inde 105
 sacrilegus Verres referebant nauibus altis
 occulta spolia et plures de pace triumphos.
 nunc sociis iuga pauca bouum, grex paruus equarum,
 et pater armenti capto eripietur agello,
 ipsi deinde Lares, si quod spectabile signum . 110
 [si quis in aedícula deus unicus; haec etenim sunt
 pro summis, nam sunt haec maxima. despicias tu]
 forsitan imbelles Rhodios unctamque Corinthon
 despicias merito: quid resinata iuuentus
 cruraque totius facient tibi leuia gentis? 115
 horrida uitanda est Hispania, Gallicus axis
 Illyricumque latus; parce et messoribus illis
 qui saturant Urbem Circo scaenaeque uacantem;
 quanta autem inde feres tam dirae praemia culpae,
 cum tenues nuper Marius discinxerit Afros? 120
 curandum in primis ne magna iniuria fiat
 fortibus et miseris. tollas licet omne quod usquam est
 auri atque argenti, scutum gladiumque relinques.
 et iaculum et galeam; spoliatis arma supersunt.
 quod modo proposui, non est sententia, uerum est; 125
 credite me uobis folium recitare Sibyllae.

105 Dolabella Φ : Dolabellae *Ruperti*: dolo bellans *Eden*. audax *Knoche*: atque
 hinc *mss*: rapax *Nisbet*: astuque *Eden*: praedoque *Braund*: hinc atque hinc
Weidner

111–112 *deleuit Manso*.

111 etenim sunt *mss*: retinentes *Courtney* rapiuntur *Dimatteo*

119–21 *deleuit Jachmann*

123–4 scutum – galeam *deleuit Hermann*

123 relinques Φ : relinquo *PST*

124 *deleuit Lachmann*. iaculum *P. Vat.* 3286 iacula Φ

Every house in those days was full of stuff, there stood a huge
 heap 100
 of cash, a cloak from Sparta and purple from Cos,
 and along with paintings by Parrhasius and Myron's statues
 the ivory of Phidias lived, and everywhere were many
 works of Polyclitus, and hardly any tables without a Mentor.
 From there Dolabella and ruthless Antonius, from there 105
 the impious Verres would bring back in their tall ships
 hidden spoils and more triumphs over the peaceful.
 These days the allies will have a few head of cattle, a small herd
 of mares
 and the sire of the herd snatched from them when the little estate
 is taken,
 and even the Household Gods, if there is a statue worth looking at 110
 [if any single god is in the little shrine: for these things are
 as good as it gets, for these are now the biggest. You might despise]
 perhaps the unwarlike Rhodians and oiled Corinth
 you might rightly despise: what will the resin-smeared youth
 and the hairless legs of a whole people do to you? 115
 You should avoid hairy Spain, the Gallic region
 and the flank of Illyricum: and spare those harvesters
 who glut the city when it is on holiday to enjoy the races
 and the stage; Besides, what amount of pay-off will you get
 for such appalling behaviour
 now that Marius has not long ago stripped the Africans
 to the bone? 120
 The first priority is to ensure that no wrong is done to people
 who are
 strong and desperate. Even if you lift all the gold and silver
 which is
 anywhere to be found, you will still leave them their shield
 and sword
 [and spear and helmet: even plundered people keep their weapons.]
 What I have just set down is not opinion, it is true: 125
 believe that I am reading aloud to you a page of the Sibyl.

si tibi sancta cohors comitum, si nemo tribunal
 uendit acersecomes, si nullum in coniuge crimen
 nec per conuentus et cuncta per oppida curuis
 unguibus ire parat nummos raptura Celaeno, 130
 tum licet a Pico numeres genus, altaque si te
 nomina delectant omnem Titanida pugnam
 inter maiores ipsumque Promethea ponas.
 [de quocumque uoles proauom tibi sumito libro.]
 quod si praecipitem rapit ambitio atque libido, 135
 si frangis uirgas sociorum in sanguine, si te
 delectant hebetes lasso lictore secures,
 incipit ipsorum contra te stare parentum
 nobilitas claramque facem praeferre pudendis.
 omne animi uitium tanto conspectius in se 140
 crimen habet, quanto maior qui peccat habetur.
 quo mihi te, solitum falsas signare tabellas,
 in templis quae fecit auus statuamque parentis
 ante triumphalem? quo, si nocturnus adulter
 tempora Santonico uelas adoperta cucullo? 145
 praeter maiorum cineres atque ossa uolucris
 carpento rapitur pinguis Lateranus, et ipse,
 ipse rotam adstringit sufflamine mulio consul,
 nocte quidem, sed Luna uidet, sed sidera testes
 intendunt oculos. finitum tempus honoris 150
 cum fuerit, clara Lateranus luce flagellum
 sumet et occursum numquam trepidabit amici

131 tum *KLOTZ*: tu *PSAFGHU*: tunc *Vat.Pal.* 1701

133 ponas *PAL Sang.*: pingas Φ

134 *deleuit Ribbeck*

135 ambitio *PG Sang.*: ambitus Φ

147 Lateranus *PSGU*: Damasippus $\Phi\Sigma$

148 sufflamine mulio *GUSang.*: sufflamine multo *Laur.* 34.40: multo sufflamine
P\Phi

151 Lateranus *PGU*: Damasippus $\Phi\Sigma$

152 numquam *PAGU*: nusquam Φ

If you have a team of staff who are not corrupt, if no
 long-haired youth
 sells your verdict, if there is no blame in your wife
 and she does not set out to go through the district courts and all
 the towns
 with curved talons, out for cash like a Harpy, 130
 then you may count your ancestry from Picus and (if lofty
 names are
 what pleases you) you can name the whole Titan phalanx
 and Prometheus himself amongst your ancestors.
 [take your great-grandfather from whichever book you like.]
 But if it's a thirst for power and sex which drives you headlong, 135
 if you shatter rods in the blood of our allies, and if
 you are pleased by axes blunted in the hands of an exhausted
 lictor,
 then the pedigree of your actual parents begins to oppose you
 and to hold a bright torch to your shameful deeds.
 Every moral failing faces more public charges against itself 140
 the greater the reputation of the sinner himself.
 What use are you, tell me, if you are in the habit of sealing
 fake wills
 in temples which your grandfather built and in front of a statue
 of your parent celebrating a triumph? If you are an adulterer
 by night
 shrouding your brow with a Gallic cap? 145
 Fat Lateranus races
 in his flying mule-cart past the ashes and bones
 of his ancestors and the man himself
 personally slows the wheel with the brake – a muleteer consul –
 by night for sure, but the moon sees him, but the stars
 sharpen their eyes to witness. When his period of office 150
 has finished, Lateranus will take up his lash in bright daylight
 and will never be nervous of meeting a friend

iam senis ac uirga prior adnuet atque maniplos
 soluet et infundet iumentis hordea lassis.
 interea, dum lanatas robumque iuuenum 155
 more Numae caedit, Iouis ante altaria iurat
 solam Eponam et facies olida ad praesepia pictas.
 sed cum peruigiles placet instaurare popinas,
 obuius assiduo Syrophoenix udus amomo
 currit – Idymaeae Syrophoenix incola portae 160
 hospitis adfectu dominum regemque salutans –
 et cum uenali Cyane succincta lagona.
 defensor culpae dicet mihi ‘fecimus et nos
 haec iuuenes.’ esto, desisti nempe nec ultra
 fouisti errorem. breue sit quod turpiter audes, 165
 quaedam cum prima resecantur crimina barba.
 indulge ueniam pueris: Lateranus ad illos
 thermarum calices inscriptaque linthea uadit
 maturus bello Armeniae Syriaeque tuendis
 amnibus et Rheno atque Histro. praestare Neronem 170
 securum ualet haec aetas. mitte Ostia, Caesar,
 mitte, sed in magna legatum quaere popina:
 inuenies aliquo cum percussore iacentem,
 permixtum nautis et furibus ac fugitiuis,
 inter carnifices et fabros sandapilarum 175
 et resupinati cessantia tympana galli.
 aequa ibi libertas, communia pocula, lectus
 non alius cuiquam, nec mensa remotior ulli.
 quid facias talem sortitus, Pontice, seruum?
 nempe in Lucanos aut Tusca ergastula mittas. 180
 at uos, Troiugeneae, uobis ignoscitis et quae

155 robumque *PS Sang*, Σ : toruumque Φ rubumque *GU*

159 adsiduo *codd.*: Assyrio *Dorleans*. udus Φ : unctus *A*

159–60 Syrophoenix...Idymaeae *om. F del. Hermann*

161 salutans *Leo* salutat ΦP

163 dicet *GT*: dicit Φ

166 resecantur *PAGLOU*: resecantur *FHKTZ*

170 amnibus *codd.*: finibus *Markland*.

170–174 et ... et *PAGU Sang*: aut ... aut Φ

who is now old, and he will take the initiative in greeting him
 with his stick
 and untie the hay-bundles and pour out the barley for the weary
 beasts.
 Meanwhile, while he slaughters woolly animals and a ruby bull 155
 in the manner of Numa, when he is in front of Jupiter's altars
 he swears oaths
 only by Epona and the images painted on the stinking stables.
 When he chooses to revisit his all-night diners
 the Phoenician, awash with constant perfume,
 runs to meet him – the Phoenician who lives at the Jewish gate 160
 with his host's welcome greeting him as master and lord – along
 with Cyane, her skirt hitched up with her bottle for sale.
 Someone will excuse this misbehaviour and say 'we too did
 this when we were young'. Yes – but you stopped and did not
 indulge the waywardness any further. Let shameless
 adventuring be short-lived 165
 and some misbehaviour should be trimmed with the first beard.
 Make allowances for the sins of youth: but Lateranus marches
 off to those
 bath-house boozers and slogan-clad awnings
 when he is ready for war, for defending the rivers of Armenia
 and Syria
 and the Rhine and the Danube. This time of life has the
 power to secure 170
 Nero's safety. Send your governor to Ostia, Caesar,
 send him – but look for him in some massive tavern: you will
 find him lying with some assassin
 mingled with sailors, thieves and runaways
 amongst executioners and coffin-makers 175
 and the idle drums of the eunuch-priest flat on his back.
 it's equal freedom for all there, shared cups, not separate
 couches for some nor a table set aside for anyone.
 What would you do if fate gave you a slave of that sort, Ponticus?
 You would send him to the folk in Lucania or the Etrurian
 dungeons, surely. 180
 But you, scions of the Trojans, you pardon yourselves and so what
 would be

turpia cerdoni Volesos Brutumque decebunt.
 quid si numquam adeo foedis adeoque pudendis
 utimur exemplis, ut non peiora supersint?
 consumptis opibus uocem, Damasippe, locasti 185
 sipario, clamosum ageres ut Phasma Catulli.
 Laureolum uelox etiam bene Lentulus egit,
 iudice me dignus uera cruce. nec tamen ipsi
 ignoscas populo; populi frons durior huius,
 qui sedet et spectat triscurria patriciorum, 190
 planipedes audit Fabios, ridere potest qui
 Mamercorum alapas. quanti sua funera uendant
 quid refert? uendunt nullo cogente Nerone,
 nec dubitant celsi praetoris uendere ludis.
 finge tamen gladios inde atque hinc pulpita poni, 195
 quid satius? mortem sic quisquam exhorruit, ut sit
 zelotypus Thymeles, stupidi collega Corinthi?
 res haut mira tamen citharoedo principe mimus
 nobilis. haec ultra quid erit nisi ludus? et illic
 dedecus Urbis habes, nec murmillonis in armis 200
 nec clipeo Gracchum pugnante aut falce supina;
 damnat enim tales habitus [sed damnat et odit,
 nec galea faciem abscondit]: mouet ecce tridentem.
 postquam uibrata pendentia retia dextra
 nequiquam effudit, nudum ad spectacula uoltum 205

182 Uolesos Φ : uolusos *O Vat.Reg.2029*: uolsos *P.* Brutumque Φ : rutulumque
GU

192 funera *PAU*: uerbera *Courtney*

194 *del. Ruperti*

195 poni *P*: pone Φ : ponunt *FH*

196 sic *O Vat. Pal.1701* Σ : si *P* Φ praestare...aetas *del. Nisbet*

198 mimus *GU*: natus Φ

201 pugnante aut *PSAGU*: aut pugnante Φ

202 *del. Guyet*

202 sed *PAGU*: et Φ

202-3 sed damnat ... abscondit: *deleuit Hermann*

203 faciem *PAGU*: frontem Φ

204 uibrata *codd.*: librata *Courtney*

disgraceful for a labourer is sure to be honourable for the Volesi
or a Brutus.

What if we never find cases which are so disgusting, so shameless
that there are not even worse ones around?

When you had spent up all your money, Damasippus, you hired
out your voice 185

to the mime-show, to play the noisy ghost of Catullus.

Speedy Lentulus played Laureolus quite well in fact,
and in my opinion deserved a real crucifixion. Do not however
pardon

the crowd themselves: these people have a brazen front
and can sit watching the triple-buffooneries of patricians, 190
listen to barefoot Fabii and can laugh at the slapstick at the
expense of the

Mamerci. What does it matter how much they sell their
'deaths' for?

They sell them without being forced to do so by Nero
and have no qualms about selling them at the games of the lofty
praetor.

Imagine that either execution or the stage are set up as
alternatives – 195

which is preferable? Has anyone trembled at death so much
that he would be

Thymeles's jealous husband, the colleague of the clown Corinthus?
An aristocrat acting in a mime is nothing to be surprised at
when the emperor is

a lyre-player. Beyond this what will there be except the
gladiatorial school? There too

you have the disgrace of the city – Gracchus fighting neither
in the weapons of 200

murmillio nor with shield or curved blade;

he scorns gear like that [but scorns and hates it
and does not hide his face in a helmet]: look – he is brandishing
a trident.

After he has steadied his right hand and cast his dangling net
to no avail, he lifts up his bare face to the crowd 205

erigit et tota fugit agnoscendus harena.
 credamus tunicae, de faucibus aurea cum se
 porrigat et longo iactetur spira galero.
 ergo ignominiam grauiolem pertulit omni
 uolnere cum Graccho iussus pugnare secutor. 210
 libera si dentur populo suffragia, quis tam
 perditus ut dubitet Senecam praeferre Neroni?
 cuius supplicio non debuit una parari
 simia nec serpens unus nec culleus unus.
 par Agamemnonidae crimen, sed causa facit rem 215
 dissimilem. quippe ille deis auctoribus ultor
 patris erat caesi media inter pocula, sed nec
 Electrae iugulo se polluit aut Spartani
 sanguine coniugii, nullis aconita propinquis
 miscuit, in scena numquam cantauit Oresten, 220
 Troica non scripsit. quid enim Verginius armis
 debuit ulcisci magis aut cum Vindice Galba,
 quod Nero tam saeua crudaque tyrannide fecit?
 haec opera atque hae sunt generosi principis artes,
 gaudentis foedo peregrina ad pulpita cantu 225
 prostitui Graiaeque apium meruisse coronae.
 maiorum effigies habeant insignia uocis,
 ante pedes Domiti longum tu pone Thyestae
 syrma uel Antigones seu personam Melanippes,
 et de marmoreo citharam suspende colosso. 230
 quid, Catilina, tuis natalibus atque Cethegi
 inueniet quisquam sublimius? arma tamen uos
 nocturna et flammis domibus templisque paratis,
 ut braccatorum pueri Senonumque minores,
 ausi quod liceat tunica punire molesta. 235

220 Oresten *Weidner*: Orestes *codd.*

223 *del. Knoche.* quod *Vat. Urb. 342* quid *PΦ*

224 hae sunt *PAE*: haec sunt *U Vat. 3192*: illae sunt *FH*: illae *KLOTZ*

225 cantu *PGU et test. Prisc GL 2.419*: saltu *Φ*

229 Antigones *Φ*: Antigonae *P Mico.* seu *Vat. 3192, Vat. 3286*: tu *Φ*: aut
Hermann

233 paratis *P Lond. Mus. Brit. Reg 15 B XII*: parastis *Φ*

and runs all over the arena for all to recognise him.
 Let's believe the tunic, as it stretches golden from his throat
 and the ribbon bouncing from his high hat.
 In this way the *secutor* who was told to fight with Gracchus
 endured shame worse than any injury could inflict. 210
 If the people were given free votes, who would be so
 beyond help as to hesitate about choosing Seneca over Nero?
 Not just one monkey needed to be acquired to punish that
 man, nor one snake or one sack.
 His crime was the equal of Agamemnon's son, but the motive
 makes the case 215
 very different. Orestes, you see, was told by gods to avenge
 his father who had been butchered at a banquet; but he did not
 pollute himself with Electra's blood nor with that of his
 Spartan wife, he prepared poison for no relatives
 and he never sang the part of Orestes on stage 220
 nor wrote *Troica*. For what should Verginius with his forces,
 or Galba with Vindex, have avenged more, of all that
 Nero did in so brutal and savage a tyranny? These are the deeds,
 these the accomplishments of the noble emperor
 who got pleasure from prostituting himself on foreign stages
 with his foul 225
 singing and winning the parsley that makes up a Greek crown.
 Let the statues of your ancestors wear the trophies of your voice,
 place in front of Domitius' feet the long robe of Thyestes
 or of Antigone or the mask of Melanippe,
 and dangle your lyre from the marble colossus. 230
 What, Catiline, can anyone find more elevated than
 your lineage or that of Cethegus? Yet still you plan night-time
 assaults, arson against homes and temples
 like the sons of the trousered Gauls and offspring of the Senones,
 and you
 had the nerve to do something deserving punishment in the
 shirt of pain. 235

sed uigilat consul uexillaque uestra coerces.
 hic nouus Arpinas, ignobilis et modo Romae
 municipalis eques, galeatum ponit ubique
 praesidium attonitis et in omni monte laborat. 240
 tantum igitur muros intra toga contulit illi
 nominis ac tituli, quantum sibi Leucade, quantum
 Thessaliae campis Octavius abstulit udo
 caedibus adsiduis gladio; sed Roma parentem,
 Roma patrem patriae Ciceronem libera dixit.
 Arpinas alius Volscorum in monte solebat 245
 poscere mercedes alieno lassus aratro;
 nodosam post haec frangebat uertice uitem,
 si lentus pigra muniret castra dolabra.
 hic tamen et Cimbros et summa pericula rerum
 excipit et solus trepidantem protegit Urbem, 250
 atque ideo, postquam ad Cimbros stragemque uolabant
 qui numquam attigerant maiora cadauera corui,
 nobilis ornatur lauro collega secunda.
 plebeiae Deciorum animae, plebeia fuerunt
 nomina; pro totis legionibus hi tamen et pro 255
 omnibus auxiliis atque omni pube Latina
 sufficiunt dis infernis Terraeque parenti.
 [pluris enim Decii quam quae seruantur ab illis.]
 ancilla natus trabeam et diadema Quirini
 et fascies meruit, regum ultimus ille bonorum. 260
 prodita laxabant portarum claustra tyrannis
 exulibus iuuenes ipsius consulis et quos
 magnum aliquid dubia pro libertate deceret,
 quod miraretur cum Coclite Mucius et quae
 imperii fines Tiberinum uirgo natauit. 265
 occulta ad patres produxit crimina seruus

241 sibi *Jahn*: in *PSGU*: non Φ : unda *Weidner*: uix *Hermann*, *Ribbeck*: ima *Eden*

251 Cimbros *codd*: cumulos *Nisbet*

256 pube *PSAGU*: plebe Φ

258 *del. Markland et Dobree*

266 produxit *P Lond. Mus. Brit. Reg 15 B XII*: eduxit Φ : conduxit *A Vat. 2810*

But the consul is awake and puts a stop to your standards.
 This new man from Arpinum, not a noble and only recently
 arrived in Rome
 as a municipal knight – he positions a helmeted guard
 everywhere to protect
 the thunderstruck people and he toils on every hill.
 In this way within the walls the toga gained him as much 240
 name and title as Octavius got for himself at Leucas
 and the plains of Thessaly with his sword dripping
 with constant bloodshed; but Rome called Cicero ‘parent’,
 a free Rome called him ‘father of the fatherland’.
 Another man from Arpinum used to work for wages 245
 on the Volscian hills, exhausted with working another man’s
 plough;
 after this he would have a knotty vine-staff broken on his head
 if he was slow in fortifying the camp with a sluggish pick-axe.
 Yet this man takes on the Cimbri and the utmost state emergency
 and he alone protects the quivering city 250
 and so, when the crows flew down to the Cimbri and the
 slaughter – crows
 which had never tasted bigger corpses than these –
 his aristocratic colleague is adorned with second laurels.
 The souls of the Decii were plebeian, their names were
 plebeian: and yet these men satisfy the gods of the underworld 255
 and mother Earth on behalf of all the legions, all the
 allies and the entire youth of Latium.
 [for the Decii are worth more than all that is saved by them.]
 A man born of a slave-girl deserved the robe and the crown of
 Quirinus
 and his rods of office, he being the last of the good kings. 260
 The men who betrayed and tried to undo the locks on the gates
 to the tyrants
 in exile were the sons of the consul himself – men who should have
 been doing something great for their still shaky freedom,
 something to impress Mucius and Cocles and that girl
 who swam the Tiber (the border of the empire in those days). 265
 It was a slave who revealed the hidden crimes to the senators,

matronis lugendus; at illos uerbera iustis
afficiunt poenis et legum prima securis.

malo pater tibi sit Thersites, dummodo tu sis
Acacidae similis Volcaniaque arma capessas,
quam te Thersitae similem producat Achilles.
et tamen, ut longe repetas longeque reuoluas
nomen, ab infami gentem deducis asylo;
maiorum primus, quisquis fuit ille, tuorum
aut pastor fuit aut illud quod dicere nolo.

270

275

a slave who deserved to be mourned by ladies; while those
men are rightly

punished with flogging and the first legal axe.

I prefer you to have Thersites for a father (so long as you are
like the grandson of Aeacus and seize the armour of Vulcan) 270
than for Achilles to produce you as a man like Thersites.

Yet all the same, if you go back a long way and unwind your name
a long way, you still trace your descent from the notorious asylum:
the first of your ancestors, whoever he was, was
either a shepherd or else something I am not inclined to name. 275